IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-5 (canceled).

6. (previously presented) The process of claim 16 wherein said oxidizing agent generated by electrolysis is generated by subjecting at least a portion of said at least a portion of said mixture of biosolids and unconverted organic material to electrolysis.

Claims 7-15 (canceled)

16. (previously presented) A process for the treatment of organic waste comprising the steps of:

(a) feeding organic waste to a biological reactor and subjecting said organic waste to biological digestion so as to convert at least a portion of said organic waste to a clear decant and a mixture of biosolids and unconverted organic material;

(b) contacting a least a portion of said mixture of biosolids and unconverted organic material with at least one oxidizing agent comprising an oxidizing agent generated by electrolysis in order to chemically convert said unconverted organic material in a chemical treatment unit substantially without any biological digestion of said unconverted organic material;

(c) monitoring the oxidation-reduction potential of said at least a portion of said mixture of biosolids and unconverted organic material in said chemical treatment unit and adjusting the concentration of said at least one oxidizing agent in contact with said at least a portion of said mixture to maintain said oxidation-reduction potential of said at least a portion of said mixture at greater than 0 mV so as to convert said at least a portion of said mixture to a conditioned effluent; and

(d) returning said conditioned effluent to said biological reactor.

17. (previously presented) A process for the treatment of organic waste comprising the steps of:

(a) feeding organic waste to a biological reactor and subjecting said organic waste to biological digestion so as to convert at least a portion of said organic waste to a clear decant and a mixture of biosolids and unconverted organic material;

(b) contacting a least a portion of said mixture of biosolids and unconverted organic material with at least one oxidizing agent comprising an oxidizing agent generated by electrolysis in order to chemically convert said unconverted organic material in a chemical treatment unit;

(c) monitoring the oxidation-reduction potential of said at least a portion of said mixture of biosolids and unconverted organic material in said chemical treatment unit and adjusting the concentration of said at least one oxidizing agent in contact with said at least a portion of said mixture to maintain said oxidation-reduction potential of said at least a portion of said mixture at greater than 200 mV so as to convert said at least a portion of said mixture to a conditioned effluent; and

(d) returning said conditioned effluent to said biological reactor.

COMMENTS ON STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

In the official action of February 27, 2004, the Examiner has indicated that claims 6, 16 and 17 are allowed. In the reasons for allowance, the Examiner pointed out the prior art failure to teach or suggest the subject matter of claim 17 in which the "chemical treatment unit" is operated at certain specified conditions. While this is correct, applicant has continuously asserted throughout the prosecution of this application that the claimed invention, requiring contacting of a mixture of biosolids and unconverted organic materials with an oxidizing agent in a chemical treatment unit, is one which must be substantially free of any biological reactions in such chemical treatment unit. In response to a prior rejection under § 112, applicant had thus referred to portions of the specification which outlined conditions in the chemical treatment unit, including neutral pH, relatively high temperatures and pressures, and the like which produce such an environment. The Examiner has specifically referred to the specific such conditions from the specification, but it is applicant's position that, while these conditions do demonstrate that the specification discloses this important limitation (that the chemical treatment unit is substantially free of biological reaction), the present claims are clearly not specifically limited to these particular process conditions, including neutral pH, relatively high temperatures of about 120°C to about 300°C, and relatively high pressures of about 2 ATM to about 8 ATM. Those specific limitations are not set forth in the claims, and again are illustrative of conditions under which the chemical treatment unit would inherently be substantially free of biological reaction.

In fact, the Examiner then goes on, at page three of the official action of February 23, 2004, to discuss applicant's prior assertions in this regard. While applicant stands by

these assertions, and particularly confirms that the conditions set forth in the specification would result in a chemical treatment unit in which substantially no biological reaction occurs, it is again noted that the particular limitations which are referred to from the specification are not part of the claims, and the claims are not so limited.

In all other respects, it is understood that this application is in condition for allowance, and such action is therefore respectfully solicited.

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

Dated: March 25, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

By _____

Arnold H. Krumholz
Registration No.: 25,428
LERNER, DAVID, LITTENBERG,
KRUMHOLZ & MENTLIK, LLP
600 South Avenue West
Westfield, New Jersey 07090
(908) 654-5000
Attorney for Applicant

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